

ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY

Policy number	POL004	Version	002
Drafted by	PM	Approved by Branch Executive on	27 August 2013
Responsible person	Business Manager	Scheduled review date	May 2015

INTRODUCTION

The Access and Equity Policy set out in this document is drawn up on the model of the Australian Government's *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society*. The Charter is the key document guiding the Australian Government's Access and Equity strategy. It helps to ensure that government programs (and those programs funded by the government but delivered by contractors, including not-for-profits) meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse society.

PURPOSE

The Union acknowledges that its legal and moral responsibilities cover the following areas of its operation:

- access in the provision of services
- access in employment
- access in the provision of information
- access to any training and development
- access to events

The Charter integrates a set of service delivery principles concerning cultural diversity into the strategic planning, policy development, budget, and reporting processes of service delivery, irrespective of whether these services are provided by government agencies, community organisations, or commercial enterprises.

POLICY

Access

As a service provider, the Union will make services available to all members who are entitled to them, free of any form of discrimination based on race, religion, age, national origin, language, sex, sexual orientation or mental or physical handicap, except where affirmative action may be required.

Equity

As a service provider, the Union will develop and deliver services on the basis of fair treatment of all those members who are eligible to receive them.

Communication

As a service provider, the Union will use all necessary strategies to inform eligible members of the services available, their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. The Union shall also consult with its members regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of services.

Responsiveness

As a service provider, the Union will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of members from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and be responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.

Effectiveness

As a service provider, the Union will be focused on meeting the needs of members from all backgrounds.

Efficiency

As a service provider, the Union will optimise the use of available public resources through a user-responsive approach to service delivery that meets the needs of members.

Accountability

As a service provider, the Union will have a reporting mechanism in place which ensures it is accountable for implementing access and equity objectives for its members.

AUTHORISATION

Secretary
AEU ACT Branch

ACCESS AND EQUITY PROCEDURES

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RESPONSIBILITIES

It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary to implement this policy and to report to the Branch Executive annually on its progress.

PROCEDURES

All Union employees and elected officers shall, wherever feasible, have adequate support and training to provide services and information accessible to all people.

The Union will ensure its programs are designed and constructed to provide equal access for all users.

The Union, in its role as an employer, will ensure all people have equal access to advertised positions, interviews, equipment, office accommodation, staff training and promotion.

The Union shall, wherever feasible, assess proposals for any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs for their direct impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds prior to any decision to pursue such proposals.

Any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds shall, wherever feasible, be developed by the Union in consultation with people from those backgrounds.

The Union shall, wherever feasible, for any new (or substantially revised) policies or program initiatives have a communication strategy developed and sufficiently resourced to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds of these changes.

The Union shall provide resources so that publicly available and accessible information on its policies and programs is where necessary communicated appropriately to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The Union shall require that any of its agents, contractors, or partners shall deliver outcomes consistent with this policy, and shall, in bidding for tenders or contracts, budget, where appropriate, for special provision for linguistic and cultural diversity.

The Union shall, where necessary and feasible, provide for the special needs of clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by providing language assistance through the use of interpreters or facilitators.

The Union shall, where necessary and feasible, provide for the special needs of clients in remote areas through developing outreach and community liaison arrangements.

The Union shall consider cultural diversity issues in the design and delivery of any training programs it provides.

The Union staff shall, where necessary, receive ongoing cultural diversity training so that they develop knowledge and skills to work effectively from a cultural framework.

The Union shall, where necessary and feasible, provide information in languages other than English, and through print, electronic media, and disability-appropriate methods of communication.

The Union shall, where appropriate, consult with other providers and government agencies to ensure co-ordination of services appropriate to clients' needs.

The Union shall promote diversity in the membership of its decision- making bodies, committees and working groups.

The Union shall keep in its client data collection record, where appropriate, such data as birthplace; whether a person's first language spoken was English; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background; Australian South Sea Islander background; date of birth; year of arrival in Australia; birthplace of parents; sex; and religion (the collection of data will not always include all these items, as the relevance of these data items will vary depending on the service delivery context).

The Union shall protect the privacy of individual clients when collecting this data.

Consideration will be given to:

- collecting only data essential to the particular service delivery or evaluation purpose;
- guaranteeing anonymity; and
- ensuring that all data collection proposals are non-intrusive.

Any complaints about the implementation of this policy should be dealt with in accordance with the Member Dispute Resolution Policy.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Affirmative Action Policy (POL005)
- Member Dispute Resolution Policy (POL036)
- Staff Recruitment Policy (POL055)

AUTHORISATION

Secretary
AEU ACT Branch